



Testimony in Support of HB 1196

My name is Maddie Kennedy, and I am a Case Manager here today representing Thrive Youth Center. We are a nonprofit organization in San Antonio who works with young adults ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness, and we see the barriers that our youth face every day. Our most sincere goal is to help these young people overcome these barriers, but we also work to imagine a future where the barriers they face do not exist.

Almost every young adult I work with does not have an ID or a Birth Certificate. The process to obtain sufficient documentation and obtain their ID is arduous and often takes many months- preventing these individuals from accessing life-changing shelter, open a bank account, applying for or receiving state benefits, from being able to be hired and begin employment, or from being able to access housing.

Today I will tell you about Keith, one of Thrive's clients. Keith is a 23 year old who has been living on the streets or in Emergency Shelter since he turned 18. He is disabled and faces a number of obstacles in his journey towards independence- and unfortunately, the largest has been getting his ID. He entered our rapid re-housing program in Fall of 2020, and began actively applying for jobs the second he entered his apartment.

Unfortunately, Keith entered our program without his ID or his Birth Certificate. We have now been to the DMV over three times, in a span of over 5 months- each time, he is denied for not having the documents required to complete the process.

If Keith had a pilot license, a boat registration, or a concealed handgun license, he could get his ID. If Keith had the resources I have as a person with stable housing, he could get his ID. However, Keith has gone the six months we have supported him without a job, unable to gain the financial independence and stability he so badly wants, because the system that HB1196 advocates for is not yet in place.

Please help your constituents who are experiencing homelessness to access the shelter, healthcare, employment, and housing they need- support HB 1196.